What is concurrency?
Concurrency is the common name for Clark County's congestion and safety management system.

Concurrency is a requirement under Washington's Growth Management Act to ensure there are adequate public facilities, such as roads, schools and parks, to accommodate development.

Under state law, roads must be able to handle traffic created by a proposed development for that project to receive approval. Transportation improvements, if necessary, must be built at roughly the same time, or concurrent, with development.

More specifically, state law defines concurrent to mean that "improvements or strategies are in place at the time of development, or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years."

How is this concurrency requirement implemented?
Clark County and other local governments in Washington adopt level-of-service standards for major roads, which generally are thresholds for rush-hour traffic.

The county uses a computer traffic model to determine whether a development project would cause traffic on a road to exceed its adopted level-of-service standard. The computer model allows the county to also consider additional traffic that will be generated by developments that have been approved but not yet built.

If the additional traffic from a development project would cause the road to exceed its adopted level-of-service standard, improvements must be reasonably funded and built within six years.

Why is the county changing its approach to concurrency?
The revised program is designed to simplify the congestion management process and create standards consistent with available transportation funding and population forecasts.

What is the county new concurrency approach?
After examining concurrency systems used by other local governments, county transportation planners determined the simplest approach would be to assess a road's volume-to-capacity percentage.

Volume to capacity compares how much traffic is on a road to how much traffic the road can handle, or demand (vehicle volumes) to supply (roadway capacity). For example, a road at 100 percent is full and cannot accommodate additional vehicles.

Under the proposed policy, transportation improvements would be required if a development would increase the road's volume-to-capacity percentage to 90 percent or higher during peak travel times.

The draft policy sets specific capacities for different types of roads. For the biggest urban arterial, such as Padden Parkway, the roadway capacity would be 2,000 vehicles an hour in a single direction. Capacity for smaller collector streets would 800 vehicles an hour in a single direction.

When will this new approach take effect?
The Board of County Commissioners approved changes to Clark County Code on Aug. 19, but the changes won't take effect until commissioners also amend the Capital Facilities Plan. That won't happen until Nov. 4, 2014, at the earliest.

How can I get more information?
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